

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for delivering information comprising:
identifying a graphic symbol within an electronic image;
communicating said graphic symbol to a database of existing symbols;
matching said graphic symbol to one of said existing symbols; and
transmitting information associated with said graphic symbol to said electronic image.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said electronic image is obtained by one of:
a computer readable medium; and
an image capture device.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said identifying comprises:
automatically analyzing visual data of said electronic image; and
detecting a characteristic pattern in said visual data indicative of said graphic symbol.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein said characteristic pattern comprises at least one
of:
a size;
a shape; and
a set of colors.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
cropping said graphic symbol from said electronic image prior to said communicating.
6. The method of claim 1 further comprises:
checking said communicated graphic symbol for visual anomalies; and
altering said visual anomalies prior to said matching.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said visual anomalies comprise one or more of:
distortion;
blur;
noise;
brightness;
contrast;
perspective;
orientation; and
size.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
retrieving said information from said database associated with said matched existing
symbol.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
installing an access point to said transmitted data into said electronic image.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein said access point comprises one or more of:
a hyperlink;
a web URL;
an applet;
a user-selectable object;
a pop-up information box; and
an application shortcut.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein said information comprises one or more of:
metadata;
hypertext markup language (HTML) tags;
a uniform resource locator (URL) address;
computer logic; and
an interactive multimedia file.

12. An information management system comprising:
client-side logic executable by a client processor for detecting a unique symbol displayed within a visual image; and

server-side logic executable by a server for matching said unique symbol to at least one of a plurality of stored symbols and returning data corresponding to said matched unique symbol to said client-side logic.

13. The information management system of claim 12 further comprising:
an image capture device for capturing said visual image.

14. The information management system of claim 12 wherein said client-side logic comprises:
an image recognition application for analyzing image data of said visual image.

15. The information management system of claim 12 wherein said client-side logic comprises:
a cropping application for separating image data corresponding to said unique symbol from a remainder of said visual image.

16. The information management system of claim 12 wherein said client-side logic comprises:
image logic for incorporating said returned data into said visual image; and
a graphical user interface tool for inserting a user access point to said returned data.

17. The information management system of claim 16 wherein said user access point comprises one or more of:
a hyperlink;
a user-selectable object;
a pop-up information box; and
an application shortcut.

18. The information management system of claim 12 further comprising:
a client communication interface for transmitting said unique symbol to said server; and
a server communication interface for receiving said unique symbol from said client and transmitting said data, wherein said client communication interface receives said data transmitted by said server.

19. The information management system of claim 12 wherein said server-side logic comprises:

a graphics application for repairing defects in said detected unique symbol;
a search application for searching said plurality of stored symbols for a match; and
an error checking application for checking for errors during execution of said search application.

20. The information management system of claim 19 further comprising:
an image manager for managing execution of said server-side logic on said server.

21. The information management system of claim 12 wherein said client comprises one or more of:

an image capture device;
a personal computer (PC); and
an application server in communication with one of said image capture device and said PC.

22. the information management system of claim 12 wherein said data comprises one or more of:

metadata;
hypertext markup language (HTML) tags;
a uniform resource locator (URL) address;
program logic; and
an interactive multimedia file.

23. A method for automatically distributing information to a consumer comprising:
registering a unique graphic symbol from a vendor;
storing information from said vendor related to said unique graphic symbol in a database;
receiving an image of said unique graphic symbol automatically acquired from a picture
provided by said consumer;
searching said database to match said image to said unique graphic symbol; and
transmitting said information related to said unique graphic symbol to said picture when a
match is found.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein said image is automatically acquired at a device
of said consumer.

25. The method of claim 23 wherein said consumer obtains said picture from one of:
a computer readable medium; and
an image capture device.

26. The method of claim 23 further comprising:
creating said unique graphic symbol using a characteristic pattern, wherein said
characteristic pattern comprises at least one:

- a size;
- a shape; and
- a color scheme.

27. The method of claim 23 further comprising:
reviewing said received image of said unique graphic symbol for visual distortions; and
altering said visual distortions prior to said searching.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein said visual distortions comprise one or more of:
blur;
size;
noise;
brightness;
contrast;
perspective;
orientation; and
deformation.
29. The method of claim 23 further comprising:
searching said database for said information corresponding to said match.
30. The method of claim 23 wherein said information comprises one or more of:
metadata;
hypertext markup language (HTML) file;
a uniform resource locator (URL) address;
program logic; and
interactive multimedia file.
31. The method of claim 23 further comprising:
extracting said image of said unique brand from said picture using code accessible by
said consumer.
32. The method of claim 31 wherein said code includes a cropping application for
removing image data within said picture that is not related to said image of said unique graphic
symbol.
33. The method of claim 23 further comprising:
inserting an interface object in said picture, wherein said interface object provides said
consumer access to said transmitted information.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein said interface object comprises:

a hyperlink;

a web URL;

an applet;

a user-selectable object;

a dialog box; and

a short cut to an application.